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EXAMINER

AFOLABI, MARK O

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ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

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Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/511,772	Applicant(s) BOUILLLOUX-LAFONT ET AL.	
	Examiner MARK O. AFOLABI	Art Unit 2454	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 October 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-31 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-31 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 19 October 2004 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☒ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>10/19/2004 and 08/08/2007</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This communication is in response to application No. 10/511,772 filed on 10/19/2004, claims 1-31 have been examined.

Information Disclosure Statement

2. Applicant is respectfully reminded of the Duty to disclose 37 C.F.R. 1.56 all pertinent information and material pertaining to the patentability of applicant's claimed invention, by continuing to submitting in a timely manner PT0-1449, Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) with the filing of applicant's of application or thereafter.

Specification

3. The specification has not been checked to the extent necessary to determine the presence of all possible minor errors. Appropriate correction is required.

Drawings

4. The drawings are objected to because they fail to show necessary textual labels of features or symbols in Fig. 3 as described in the specification. For example, element 306 contains many variable as specify in the specification (e.g., in abstract as a timer device (306), on par. [0096], "a scheduler (306), on claim 1, "a trigger device (306)' and on Fig. 3, is "Scheduler with timers", element 307 contains many variables. Please be constituent to make it clear. Any structural detail that is of sufficient importance to be described should be shown in the drawing. Optionally, applicant may wish to include a table next to the present figure to fulfill this requirement. See 37 CFR 1.83. 37 CFR 1.84(n)(o) is recited below:

"(n) Symbols. Graphical drawing symbols may be used for conventional elements when appropriate. The elements for which such symbols and labeled representations are used must be adequately identified in the specification. Known devices should be illustrated by symbols which

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have a universally recognized conventional meaning and are generally accepted in the art. Other symbols which are not universally recognized may be used, subject to approval by the Office, if they are not likely to be confused with existing conventional symbols, and if they are readily identifiable”.

(o) Legends. Suitable descriptive legends may be used, or may be required by the Examiner, where necessary for understanding of the drawing, subject to approval by the Office. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Objections

5. Claims 1-31 are objected to because of the following informalities:

There is a missing colon in the end of the preamble (e.g., " the chat manager comprising in claim 1", "the chat system further comprising" in claim 12, etc). Appropriate correction is required on all claims.

Per claims 20-31 are objected to because “a claim which depends from a dependent claim should not be separated by any claim which does not also depend from said dependent claim. It should be kept in mind that a dependent claim may refer *to any preceding independent claim*. In general, applicant's sequence will not be changed”. See MPEP § 608.01(n). Claims 20-24 are referring back to claims 6 to 8, also, claim 25-29 are referring back to claim 17 and claims 30-31 are not in compliance with MPEP § 608.01(n). A series of singular dependent claims is permissible in which a dependent claim refers to a preceding claim which, in turn, refers to another preceding claim. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

6. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

7. Claims 1-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claims 1 and 2 appear to be indefinite or unclear; For example claim 1 “a trigger device (306) and in claim 2 “a scheduler device (306)”, is 306 a trigger or a scheduler?

Again, in claim 4, “a notification system (308)”, and on claim 7, “a notification server (308)”.

Furthermore, claim 8 is referring to “a distant access (303)”, the specification reads “client application (303)” and the drawing reads “HTML Client (303)”.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

8. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action: (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

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9. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

10. Claims 1-6, 8-13 and 15-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Trovato** et al. (WO 00/39978) (**Trovato** hereafter) and **Tapissier** et al. (2003/0078972 A1) (**Tapissier** hereafter).

Regarding claim 1, a chat manager system (304) for administrating an event-related chat room, the chat manager comprising:

Trovato teaches,

a chat room creation device (307) which communicates with a chat server (314) (e.g., the chat server 100 includes an access request processor 110 that receives access requests from user communication devices 200, Pp. 3, lines 13-20, *Trovato*) to perform at least one function selected from the group consisting of creating, cancelling and joining a chat room (e.g., six user communication devices 101-106 that submit access requests to the access request processor 110 at times T1-T6, Pg., 3, lines 20-30, esp. lines 24-27, *Trovato*), and

Trovato fails to explicitly teach the a trigger device (306) which is programmed to activate itself at the occurrence of an event and automatically sends a request for creation of a chat room to the chat room creation device.

However, **Tapissier teaches** a trigger device (306) which is programmed to activate itself at the occurrence of an event (e.g., Ad Manager triggers the Carousel

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Manager to rebuild the broadcast catalog of chat room promotions, targeted advertisements and filters...advertising contents presented to the viewer while the viewer is on line, [0053 and 0064], Tapissier), and automatically sends a request for creation of a chat room to the chat room creation device (e.g., creating a community of chat room users from a group of chat room users and sending an notice of activity relating to the chat room to the community of chat room users, [0013-0015], esp. [0013], Tapissier).

Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to add the features of **Tapissier** for a trigger or an alert or a notification device to activate itself during an event to be able to create a chat-room names and builds schedules of broadcast, or broadcast in conjunction with particular programs and also set the automatic request for a chat room by setting the parameters such as scheduling, automatic cloning of chat rooms on/off, etc., [0079 and 0081], Tapissier.

Regarding claim 2, further comprising a scheduler device (306) to maintain a playlist of events, each event being associated to at least one event information item selected from the group consisting of (e.g., abstract, Trovato):

identification of event provider,

name of event,

begin time,

end time,

name of chat room,

topic of chat room,

the scheduler device being interfaced to the trigger device to program the trigger device according to event information of the playlist (e.g., the chat application can be

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used on all or selected channels, or used only when triggered by an editing teams, e.g., for association with a specific program or programs. An authoring tool, integrated with publisher, enables the creation of chat-room names and builds schedules of broadcast. The present invention enables scheduling of chat rooms for broadcast in conjunction with particular programs, broadcast periodically, broadcast at schedule times or invoked and broadcast when users select the chat room from a client device, [0079], Tapissier).

Regarding claim 3, in which the request for creation includes event information (e.g., the chat server may place the first dozen people who initiate a chat session at **8:02** p.m. on Monday while viewing a given television station, and have expressed an interest in sports, in one chat room, based on the likelihood that these people want to discuss the Monday night football game, Pg. 2, lines 11-32, particularly lines 24-27, Trovato).

Regarding claim 4, the chat manager system further comprising a notification system (308) adapted to generate a notification signal intended to notify a potential user of the created chat room (e.g., list. The preferred invention notifies the second user when a member of its buddy list signs onto a particular chat room, for example, a metaphysics discussion group, [0097], Tapissier).

Regarding claim 5, further comprising a discussion transmission device (307, 315) which receives chat room data from the chat server corresponding to exchanges between users connected to the created chat room, and forwards the chat room data to potential users of the

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created chat room (e.g., The broadcast service provider combines the audio/video (AIV) and interactive portions into a single signal for transmission to a receiver connected to the user's television. The signal is generally compressed prior to transmission and transmitted through typical broadcast channels, such as cable television (CATV) lines or direct satellite transmission systems, [0006-0008], esp. [0006] and [0071], Tapissier).

Regarding claim 6, a digital television operator head end system (301) for broadcasting services to subscriber decoders (309) (e.g., The broadcast streamer then performs multiplexing (according to code/data ratio and bit rate requirements) of the applications and An/'data and sends the multiplexed data to the broadcast equipment for broadcast, [0060], Tapisseier), comprising a chat manager system according to anyone of claims 1 to 5 (e.g., same rejection is applicable as in anyone of claims 1 to 5).

Regarding claim 7, further comprising

a broadcast device (310, 311, 313) used for preparing a transmission of information to the subscriber decoders (e.g., The chat server 100 includes an access request processor that receives 'access requests from user communication devices 200, and a network former 130 that forms individual chat networks in response to the access requests, Pg. 3, lines 12-32, Trovato),

a notification server (308) interfaced with the chat manager to generate a notification message to be transmitted by the broadcast device (e.g., chat room application server **1302** of the present invention, takes all chat room

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content (chat room numbers **1,2,3** and **4**) from server **1200** and broadcasts it to unregistered and disconnected chat clients **1306** and **1308** who are lurking but are not connected via a back channel connection to the chat room or chat server, [0068], Tapissier).

a service plan device (316) interfaced with the chat manager to provide a service number corresponding to the event, the service number being used by the notification server to generate a notification message for the concerned service only (e.g., The viewer manager **252** supports multiple viewer identification and registration authentication at a single STB through nicknames and/or personal identification numbers (PINS) plus, the viewer identifier derived from the client device identifier number(s), transaction history, viewer profiles, nicknames and personal identification numbers, [0057-0058], esp. [0057 and 0064], Tapisseier).

Regarding claim 8, further comprising a programming server (302) interfaced with the chat manager to allow a distant access (303) for programming (e.g., the network operator uses the Service Manger **238** to register the services and the negotiated business rules **222** (e.g. schedule, bandwidth requirements, service access to viewer information) associated with the service, [0043], Tapissier).

Regarding claim 9, a chat system for a digital television network comprising a digital television operator head end system (e.g., Chat application preferably uses OpenTV Streamer technology. OpenTV Streamer is the head-end solution that broadcasts multiple streams of data reliably and efficiently, [0076], Tapissier) according to anyone of claims 6 to 8, and at least a decoder (309) for receiving and decoding services broadcast by the digital television operator, the decoder at least comprising a chat client (319) (e.g., The content of the chat

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room may also be spoken aloud utilizing a script to language translator or actual spoken responses from the chat room participants. The chat room translator also translates either script or verbal spoken language from one language to another, e.g. French to English. Persons participating in a chat room may select a simulated voice type to enunciate either their written or spoken chat room contributions, [0010], Tapissier).

Regarding claim 10, a chat system for a digital television network comprising a digital operator head end system (301) for broadcasting to subscriber decoders (309), the digital operator head end system comprising

a chat room creation device (307) which communicates with a chat server (314) (e.g., the chat server 100 includes an access request processor 110 that receives access requests from user communication devices 200, Pp. 3, lines 13-20, Trovato) to create, cancel and/or join an event related chat room (e.g., six user communication devices 101 -106 that submit access requests to the access request processor, Pg., 3, lines 20-30, esp. lines 24-27, Trovato),

a trigger device (306) which may be programmed to activate itself at the occurrence of an event (e.g., Ad Manager triggers the Carousel Manager to rebuild the broadcast catalog of chat room promotions, targeted advertisements and filters...advertising contents presented to the viewer while the viewer is on line, [0053 and 0064], Tapissier) and automatically sends a request for creation of a chat room to the chat room creation device (e.g., creating a community of chat room users from a group of chat room users and sending an notice of activity relating to the chat room to the community of chat room users, [0013-0015], esp. [0013], Tapissier),

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a broadcast device (310, 311, 313) used for preparing a transmission of information to the subscriber decoders (e.g., the converted content is formatted into a data carousel and multiplexed by the Open Streamer **256** for broadcast to the client 212, [0042], Tapissier),

a notification server (308) (e.g., item 1302 of Fig. 13, 'application server', Tapissier) to generate a notification message to be transmitted by the broadcast device, the notification message being related to the creation of an event related chat room (e.g., chat room application server **1302** of the present invention, takes all chat room content (chat room numbers **1,2,3** and **4**) from server **1200** and broadcasts it to unregistered and disconnected chat clients **1306** and **1308** who are lurking but are not connected via a back channel connection to the chat room or chat server, [0068], Tapissier).

Regarding claim 11, further comprising a scheduler device (306) to maintain a playlist of events, each event being associated to at least one event information item selected from the group of (e.g., abstract, Trovato):

identification of event provider,

name of event,

begin time,

end time,

name of chat room,

topic of chat room,

the scheduler device being interfaced to the trigger device to program the trigger device according to event information of the playlist (e.g., the chat application can be used on all or selected channels, or used only when triggered by

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an editing teams, e.g., for association with a specific program or programs. An authoring tool, integrated with publisher, enables the creation of chat-room names and builds schedules of broadcast. The present invention enables scheduling of chat rooms for broadcast in conjunction with particular programs, broadcast periodically, broadcast at schedule times or invoked and broadcast when users select the chat room from a client device, [0079], Tapissier).

Regarding claim 12, in which at least an event is related to a television programme, the chat system further comprising

a service plan device (316) to provide a service number corresponding to a service on which the television programme is broadcast to the subscribers, the service number being used by the notification server to generate a notification message for the concerned service only (e.g., the network former 130 uses the time of access T1-T6 as a primary factor for forming each chat network. Upon receipt of the access request and associated context and user profiles from users 10 1 and 102, the network former 130 forms the chat network 13 1 containing users 10 1 and 102 because they each requested access at approximately.the same time.while watching the same television station, col., col.5, lines 5-26, Trovato).

Regarding claim 13, a method for administrating event related chat rooms in a digital television network (e.g., the heavy phone traffic generated by the users of this service creates a sizeable revenue source for Digital TV operators. Plus, by creating viewers chat communities, [0070], Tapissier) comprising maintaining a playlist of events and related information, automatically requesting a chat server to create an event related chat room on occurrence of an event of the playlist (e.g., the user profile may be stored locally at

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the user site, and transmitted on demand to the chat server 100. The user profile may be automatically or semi-automatically generated, based for example on the user's television viewing habits... the network former 130 uses the time of access T1-T6 as a primary factor for forming each chat network., col. 5, lines 5-19, Trovato).

Regarding claim 14, further comprising

receiving information to be broadcast from a content provider (e.g., The broadcast service provider combines the audio/video (AIV) and interactive portions into a single signal for transmission to a receiver connected to the user's television, [0006-0007], Tapissier),

detecting in the information to be broadcast a determined information corresponding to an event of the playlist (e.g., the television broadcast may appear as a picture-in-picture image in a display of the chat room. The television images may be a recording of the broadcast that 30 occurred when the chat room was formed, for example the news segment that stimulated the formation of the chat session, or it may be a continuation of the current broadcast, col. 8, lines 26-34, Trovato),

automatically requesting a chat server to create an event related chat room on detecting the determined information (e.g., By providing an interface between a chat and a program listing, a chat room can be created dynamically with a broadcast show. Applications and other services can use the SP "alert" service to trigger STB resident mini-applications, [0064, 0081], Tapissier).

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Regarding claim 15, further comprising notifying potential users of a newly created event related chat room about its creation (e.g., The Service Platform provides rule based systems to create 'smart' advertising campaigns and chat room promotions. For example, participants in a Christian chat room can be targeted for notification of an upcoming chat room or program on the life of Jesus which can also be accompanied by related targeted advertisements broadcasts, such as advertisements for travel to the holy land. The targeted advertising campaigns are adaptive based on user preferences, user profiles, user chat room participation, user buying and viewing habits, and user demographics, [0053], Tapissier).

Regarding claim 16, further comprising

relating an event with a television programme (e.g., or a parameter based on the television program being viewed by the users, Pg., 7, lines 15-28, Trovato),

identifying a service number used to broadcast the television programme in the television network, using the service number to notify potential users (e.g., Names of the chat-rooms with the number of connected people; and Usernames of those connected to at least one chat-room. The data stored in flash is the last 5 usernames. The STB also enables selection and storage of a first chat room participant's nickname in a second chat room participant's buddy list. The preferred invention notifies the second user when a member of its buddy list signs onto a particular chat room, [0097], Tapissier).

Regarding claim 17, a chat manager system (304) for providing passive access to a chat room for subscribers (309) in a digital television network, the chat manager comprising,

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an interface to a chat server for receiving chat room data (e.g., A chat server (also known as IRC Server) allows multiple users to connect to it and communicate with each other in real time. One IRC server normally has numerous channels or chat rooms. The present invention can connect to either internal (operated by the network or broadcaster) or external chat servers, [0073 and 0071], Tapissier) related to a chat room currently opened on the chat server (e.g., Recent chat rooms are those chat rooms that are open to access at the time that the access request is received, col. 9, lines 18-25, Trovato),

broadcasting means (310, 311, 313) for formatting and broadcasting the chat room data to the subscribers (e.g., H20 converts HTML content into SP/client readable content. The converted content is formatted into a data carousel and multiplexed by the Open Streamer **256** for broadcast to the client **212**. Client **212** interacts with the services and if necessary communicates with the SP and the services 200, [0041-0042], esp. [0042], Tapissier).

Regarding claim 18, further comprising a buffer (315) to store chat room data for delayed broadcast by the broadcasting means (e.g., Short video and or still images of the participants are downloaded and stored at the server for broadcast during chat room interactions, [0010], Tapissier).

Regarding claim 19, a method for providing passive access to at least one of a plurality of chat rooms for subscribers in a digital television network, comprising

gathering chat room data related to the chat room from a chat server on which the chat room is opened (e.g., Chat spaces are provided by computer network service providers to allow individuals to communicate with each

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other via the computer network. Typical chat spaces are arranged into one or more chat rooms, where a number of people may meet. Each person has an identifying name or alias, and in some chat spaces, an identifying graphic item in a graphical 2-D or **3-D** representation of the chat space. Each person decides which chat room to enter or/leave, and who to talk-to, col. 1, lines 8-14, Trovato),

broadcasting the gathered chat room data to the subscribers (e.g., When a user in a chat network sends a message, it is broadcast to each of the other users in that network, col. 3, lines 27-33, Trovato).

Regarding claim 20, a decoder for receiving and processing services broadcast by a digital television operator head end system according to anyone of claims 6 to 8 comprising:

Display (item 1112 of Fig. 4, "Connection Screen", Tapissier) means to display discussion data from a chat room on a television screen, the discussion data appearing at the same time as a determined service currently being broadcast and displayed (e.g., network operator generates an interactive television signal for transmission to a viewer's television. The interactive television signal may include an interactive portion comprising of application code or control information, as well as an audio/video portion comprising a television program or other informational displays, [0006-0007], Tapissier).

Regarding claim 21, further comprising

a pop-up display (e.g., items 430 and 434 of Fig. 7, 'Open-TV STB1 and STB2', Tapissier) means that generates a pop-up window on the television screen (e.g., The first screen of the virtual channel displays an invitation to join a chat room interactivity. A splash screen is

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included to make it more appealing. This screen can be the entry point of an iTV services portal. When presented on a video channel, a pop-up menu invites the viewer to join the chat sessions, [0085-0086], esp. [0086], Tapissier), containing a notification about the creation of an event related chat room (For example, participants in a Christian chat room can be targeted for notification of an upcoming chat room or program, [0053], Tapissier).

Regarding claim 22, further comprising

connection (e.g., items 102 and 210 of Fig. 1, 'communication link', Tapissier) means to establish a return link between the decoder and the chat server, the return link being used to send discussion data from the decoder to the chat server (e.g., a broadcast path with a sufficient bandwidth is provided for the descending communications (from server broadcast to clients) and a back channel connection provided for ascending communications (from STB to server), [0083 and 0041], Tapissier).

Regarding claim 23, the return link being used as a bi-directional link that allows to receive discussion data from the chat server (e.g., a broadcast path with a sufficient bandwidth is provided for the descending communications (from server broadcast to clients) and a back channel connection provided for ascending communications (from STB to server), [0083 and 0095], Tapissier).

Regarding claim 24, further comprising

MPEG filtering means for filtering the determined service among the services being broadcast according to filtering parameters (e.g., Categories may also be

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utilized to assign chat-room profiles or provide selected filtering at the STB of broadcasting of all available chat rooms, e.g., only filtering out and viewing cooking and sports chat rooms at the STB, [0047 and 0050], Tapissier), the filtering means being connected to the pop-up display means, and the filtering parameters being used to activate the pop-up display means if the creation of the event related chat room is related to the determined service (e.g., SP provides STBs and/or clients with filters which selectively receive information in the broadcast path based on viewer profiling, so that only selected viewers having a particular filter set up in their STB captures content (advertising, information or AIV programming, etc.) in the broadcast stream, [0059], Tapissier).

Regarding claim 25, a decoder for receiving and processing chat room data broadcast by a chat manager system according to claim 17, comprising

Display (e.g., item 252 of Fig. 2, "Television", Trovato) means to display the chat room data on a television screen at the same time as a determined television programme (e.g., the chat room may appear as a picture-in-picture image on the television 252, or the television broadcast may appear as a picture-in-picture image in a display of the chat room, Pg. 8, lines 26-32, Trovato).

Regarding claim 26, further comprising

a pop-up display (e.g., items 430 and 434 of Fig. 7, 'Open-TV STB1 and STB2', Tapissier) means that generates a pop-up window on the television screen containing a notification about a creation of a chat room related to the determined television programme (e.g., The chat application is available either from a dedicated virtual channel or from a "usual" video channel

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via an invitation pop-up icon on the viewer display. At the discretion of the network operator or broadcaster, the chat application is available for the viewers of an event. The chat application can be used on all or selected channels, or used only when triggered by an editing teams, e.g., for association with a specific program or programs, [0079], Tapissier).

Regarding claim 27, further comprising

connection (e.g., items 102 and 210 of Fig. 1, 'communication link', Tapissier) means to establish a return link between the decoder and the chat server, the return link being used to send chat room data from the decoder to the chat server, thereby enabling an active access to the chat room (e.g., The application server/s receives text sent by chat-rooms users and broadcasts via return path and/or broadcast (if not the same) the content of chat-rooms; creates new clones of chat-rooms, [0095], Tapissier).

Regarding claim 28, the return link being used as a bi-directional link that allows to receive chat room data from the chat server (e.g., a broadcast path with a sufficient bandwidth is provided for the descending communications (from server broadcast to clients) and a back channel connection provided for ascending communications (from STB to server), [0083], Tapissier).

Regarding claim 29, further comprising

MPEG filtering (item 1008 of Fig. 3, 'Set Top Box' Tapissier) means for filtering the determined television programme according to filtering parameters (e.g., Categories may also be utilized to assign chat-room

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profiles or provide selected filtering at the STB of broadcasting of all available chat rooms, e.g., only filtering out and viewing cooking and sports chat rooms at the STB, [0047 and 0050], Tapissier), the filtering means being connected to the pop-up display means, and the filtering parameters being used to activate the pop-up display (e.g., chat application is available either from a dedicated virtual channel or from a "usual" video channel via an invitation pop-up icon on the viewer display. At the discretion of the network operator or broadcaster, [0079-0080], esp. [0079], Tapissier) means if the creation of the chat room related to the determined television programme is related to the television programme currently being filtered (e.g., SP provides STBs and/or clients with filters which selectively receive information in the broadcast path based on viewer profiling, so that only selected viewers having a particular filter set up in their STB captures content (advertising, information or AIV programming, etc.) in the broadcast stream, [0059], Tapissier).

Regarding claim 30, A decoder for receiving and processing chat room data in a digital television network, comprising

a notification component (317) that receives and processes a notification signal generated by a chat manager system according to claim 4, pop-up display means that display a pop-up window containing the notification signal on a television screen (e.g., chat application is available either from a dedicated virtual channel or from a "usual" video channel via an invitation pop-up icon on the viewer display. At the discretion of the network operator or broadcaster, [0079-0080] and [0086], Tapissier).

Regarding claim 31, further comprising

MPEG filtering means that use filtering parameters to filter a television programme, the MPEG filtering means being connected to the pop-up display means (e.g., chat application is available either from a dedicated virtual channel or from a "usual" video channel via an invitation pop-up icon on the viewer display, [0079-0080], esp. [0079], Tapissier), the pop-up display means being activated if the filtering parameters of a currently filtered television programme relate to the event causing the newly creation of the chat room (e.g., The interactive television signal may include an interactive portion comprising of application code or control information, as well as an audio/video portion comprising a television program or other informational displays, [0006-0008], esp. [0006], Tapissier).

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MARK O. AFOLABI whose telephone number is (571) 270-5627. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday between (8:30 am to 4:30 pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nathan Flynn can be reached on 571-272-1915. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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